

**TOWN OF ACTON**  
472 Main Street  
Acton, Massachusetts, 01720  
Telephone (978) 264-9631  
Fax (978) 264-9630

---

January 11, 2007

Ms. Catherine Coleman, Chair  
Town of Acton Community Preservation Committee  
c/o Planning Department  
Acton Town Hall  
472 Main Street  
Acton, MA 01720

RE: Community Preservation Plan Project Application Form  
Groener Land Purchase

Dear Ms. Coleman and Members:

On behalf of the Town of Acton, the Town of Acton Open Space Committee is pleased to submit the attached Project Application Form for the purchase of the "Groener land," an approximately 12.1 acre parcel of open space located adjacent to the Nagog Hill Conservation Land. The Open Space Committee suggests that this proposal is consistent with previous recommendations made by the Community Preservation Committee and approved by Town Meeting. The Groener land is the parcel of land identified as a potential candidate for land purchase in the Open Space Set-Aside proposal submitted to the Community Preservation Committee on November 13, 2006.

The Open Space Committee thanks you for your consideration of this proposal and looks forward to working with the Community Preservation Committee in advancing this proposal to Town Meeting.

Respectfully yours,

Andrew D. Magee, Chair  
Town of Acton Open Space Committee

## PROJECT APPLICATION FORM – 2007

**Applicant:** TOWN OF ACTON

**Submission Date:** NOV 13, 2006/JAN 11, 2007

**Applicant's Address, Phone Number and Email**

**Purpose: (Please select all that apply)**

Don. P. Johnson, Town Manager

472 Main Street, Acton, MA 01720

978-264-9612 manager@acton-ma.gov

☒ Open Space

☐ Community Housing

☐ Historic Preservation

☒ Recreation

**Town Committee (if applicable):**

Open Space Committee

**Project Name:**

Groener Land

**Project Location/Address:**

191 Nagog Hill Road - Tax Atlas Map D4 – Parcel 37

**Amount Requested:**

\$100,000

**Project Summary:** In the space below, provide a brief summary of the project.

The Town of Acton Open Space Committee requests that the Town of Acton Community Preservation Committee (CPC) recommend to Town Meeting that a sum of \$100,000 of 2007 Town of Acton Community Preservation Funds be dedicated to the purchase of an approximately 12.1 acre parcel of undeveloped land abutting the Nagog Hill Conservation Land. This parcel was identified as a potential purchase in the open space set-aside proposal submitted to the Community Preservation Committee on November 13, 2006. The Town of Acton and the owners of the parcel have recently come to an agreement for the transfer of this parcel and the Town now wishes to proceed with the purchase of this land utilizing Community Preservation Act funds.

The Groener land is approximately 12.1 acres in area and abuts the Nagog Hill Conservation Land. The parcel consists of approximately 8 acres of oak and maple upland forest, and 4 acres of red maple forested wetlands. It lies within areas designated as prime protection lands on the *Natural Heritage and Habitat*, the *Biodiversity and Living Waters*, and the *SVT Priorities* maps prepared by the Sudbury Valley Trustees. It is similarly located within a prime biodiversity area identified in the *2000 Biodiversity Protection and Stewardship Plan* prepared by Francis Clack under the direction of the Massachusetts Riverways Program. It also lies within the watershed of Nashoba Brook. The parcel will essentially become part of the Nagog Hill Conservation Land and be accessible for passive recreation from the existing trail system.

The purchase of this parcel would be consistent with the Town of Acton 2007 Community Preservation Plan and previous recommendations made by the CPC and approved by Town Meeting for the setting aside of funds for the preservation of open space.

**Estimated Date for Commencement of Project:**

Spring 2007

**Estimated Date for Completion of Project:**

Summer 2007

## **Project Narrative**

On behalf of the Town of Acton, the Open Space Committee is asking that the Community Preservation Committee (CPC) recommend to Town Meeting that \$100,000 of the 2007 Town of Acton Community Preservation Funds be appropriated for the purchase of a 12.1 acre parcel of undeveloped land abutting the Nagog Hill Conservation Land. This action would be consistent with the Town of Acton 2007 Community Preservation Plan and previous recommendations made by the CPC as regards expenditures for the purchase and preservation of open space.

## **Background**

In the conduct of its activities the Acton Conservation Trust, a private land trust whose mission is the preservation of open space in the Town of Acton, initiated discussions with John and Jill Groener concerning the preservation of a portion of the approximately 17.1 acre parcel on which they reside. The Groeners indicated an interest in selling and permanently protecting all but approximately 5.0 acres of land on which their residence is located. With the Groener's permission the Acton Conservation Trust then approached the Town of Acton Open Space Committee with the proposal that this parcel be purchased by the Town with Community Preservation Act funds. This proposal was enthusiastically embraced by the Committee which, through the auspices of the Town Manager's office, initiated negotiations as to the terms of the purchase. These terms were recently agreed to and a purchase and sale agreement is being prepared.

One of the keystones of the Community Preservation Act is the preservation of open space. Up until this time the Town of Acton CPC has not received any applications specifically designated for open space/land acquisition, although several proposals, such as the Assabet River Rail trail, have included modest associated land purchase. In lieu of specific land purchases, and in recognition that land acquisition will likely require significant funds, the CPC has annually recommended to Town Meeting the incremental set aside of CPA funds for the future acquisition and preservation of open space lands. The purchase of the Groener land offers an opportunity to purchase a prime open space parcel abutting existing conservation lands at a modest price.

## **Review and Recommendation Criteria**

As noted above, the acquisition and preservation of open space is one of the cornerstones of the CPA. The following section reviews the applicability of the purchase of the Groener land in relation to the Review and Recommendation Criteria of the *Town of Acton Community Preservation Plan 2007* as presented on page 20 of the Plan.

### **Consistency with the Town of Acton Community Preservation Plan**

The acquisition and preservation of open space is a basic tenant of the CPA. The Town of Acton Community Preservation Plan fully adopts the CPA's focus to the point of quoting from the Act the definition of community preservation as including "the acquisition, creation and preservation of open space...".

### **Consistency with Town of Acton Planning Documents**

The purchase of open space, and in particular open space of prime environmental value, is highly consistent with both the *Town of Acton Open Space and Recreation Plan 2002 -2007* and the *1998 Master Plan Update*.

The *Town of Acton Open Space and Recreation Plan 2002 -2007* identified three specific goals: the preservation of the remaining elements of Acton's rural character, environmental protection, and improved recreational opportunities. The objectives of these goals specifically reference the preservation of "open space" and the creation of "public open spaces and parklands." The Plan objectives include the preservation of "natural and man-made features that contribute to Acton's character such as open field, woodlands, ponds, country roads, and scenic vistas." and makes specific mention of the importance of protecting the Town's remaining farmlands. The Groener land has many of these characteristics, including natural and man-made features such as woodlands under a Chapter 61 forestry management program, wetlands, and old stone walls, and will expand the open space and parkland of the Nagog Hill Conservation Land.

The purchase of the Groener land is also clearly consistent with the *1998 Master Plan Update*. The Master Plan goals and objectives specifically includes reference to the protection of Acton's remaining farmland, the conservation of open space parcels, the creation of green belts, and the management and enhancement of Acton's existing conservation lands.

### **Economic Feasibility**

The acquisition and preservation of open space in a town like Acton, where real estate values have sky-rocketed, is an expensive proposition. It is anticipated

that the purchase of large parcels of land at market rates will require funds in excess of those available through CPA funding alone. As backland, the Groener land is being offered at a very modest price that works out to approximately \$7,500 per acre.

### **Population Served**

To the degree open space preservation serves the entire population it also serves an under-served population. The purchase of the Groener land will modestly increase the total acreage of one of Acton's finest conservation lands, the Nagog Hill Conservation Land. This land has superb wildlife and natural environment values and will contribute to the passive recreational value of the Nagog Hill Conservation Land. It lies within areas designated as prime protection lands on the *Natural Heritage and Habitat*, the *Biodiversity and Living Waters*, and the *SVT Priorities* maps prepared by the Sudbury Valley Trustees. It is also within a prime area identified in the *2000 Biodiversity Protection and Stewardship Plan* prepared by Francis Clack under the direction of the Massachusetts Riverways Program.

### **Multiple Needs and CPA Focus Areas**

The purchase of the Groener land will contribute to the preservation of the town's rural character, will offer passive recreational value, and as evidenced by the stone walls of the site preserve a site of potentially historic value either as direct preservation of historic or archeological resources. The proximity of the site to tributaries of Nashoba Brook similarly offers the possibility of specific environmental benefits, such as surface water protection.

### **Leverage of Funding**

The initiation of the discussions concerning the Groener land was the result of persistence and on-going contribution of significant time and effort on the part of the Acton Conservation Trust. The Trust is a non-profit organization of modest means, virtually the entire budget of which is spent on identifying and facilitating the protection of open space in the Town of Acton.

### **Relation to Town Assets**

The purchase of the Groener land will add approximately 12.1 acres to an existing Town-owned conservation parcel.

### **Consistency with Past Town Meeting Actions**

The Project is consistent with recent Town of Acton Town Meeting actions, which included the setting aside of \$200,000, \$300,000 and \$400,000 of CPA funds for open space acquisition and preservation in 2004, 2005 and 2006.

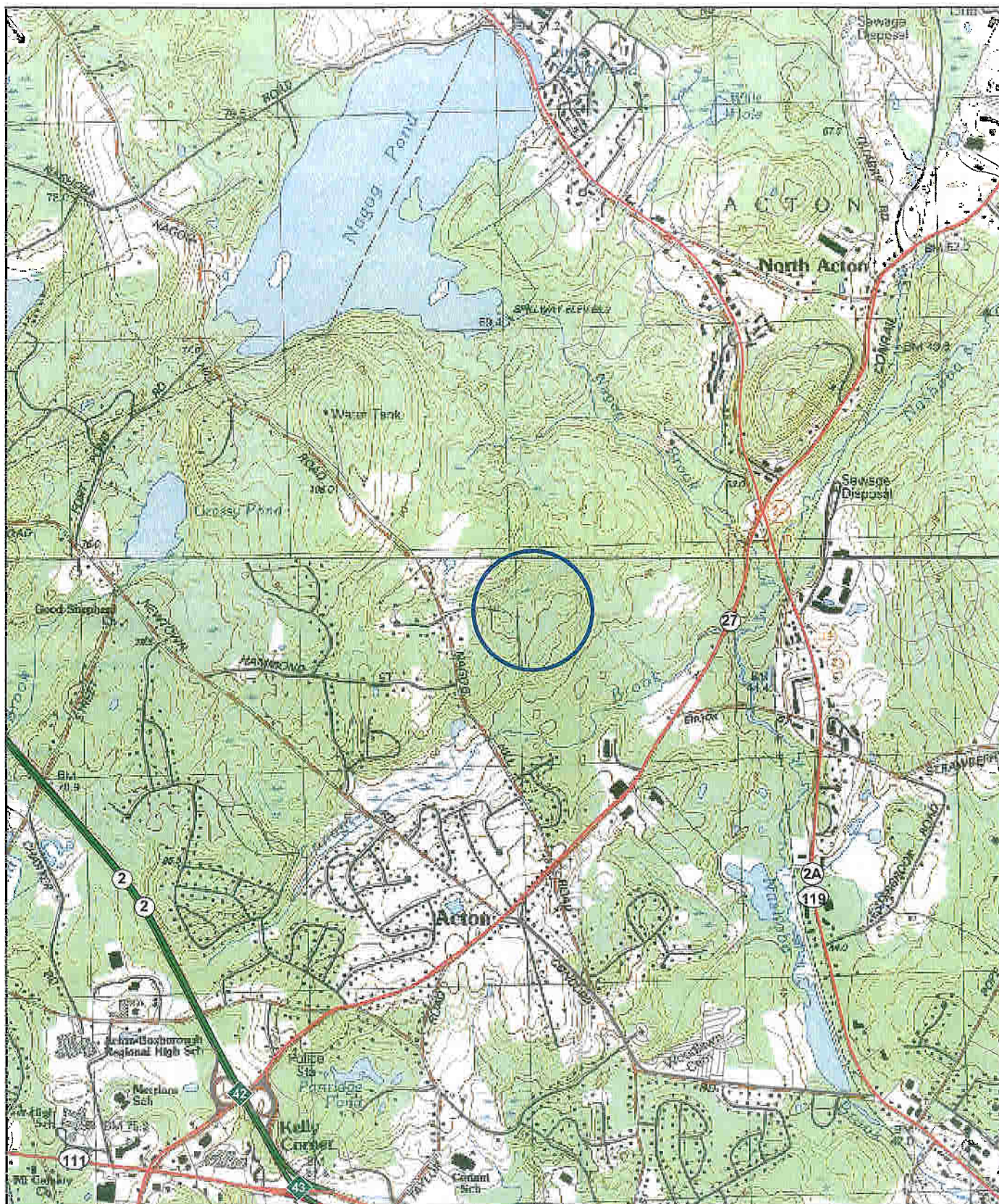
**Competency to Implement**

The Town of Acton will be applicant of this proposal to utilize CPA open space funds. The Town has successfully demonstrated competency in the implementation of CPA projects.

**Site Control**

The ownership of the parcel will lie with the Town of Acton. The Town will be a party to the required conservation restriction which will be placed on the Groener land.





Basemap: 1985 USGS Quadrangles, MassGIS

Scale 1:24,000  
1 inch = 2,000 feet

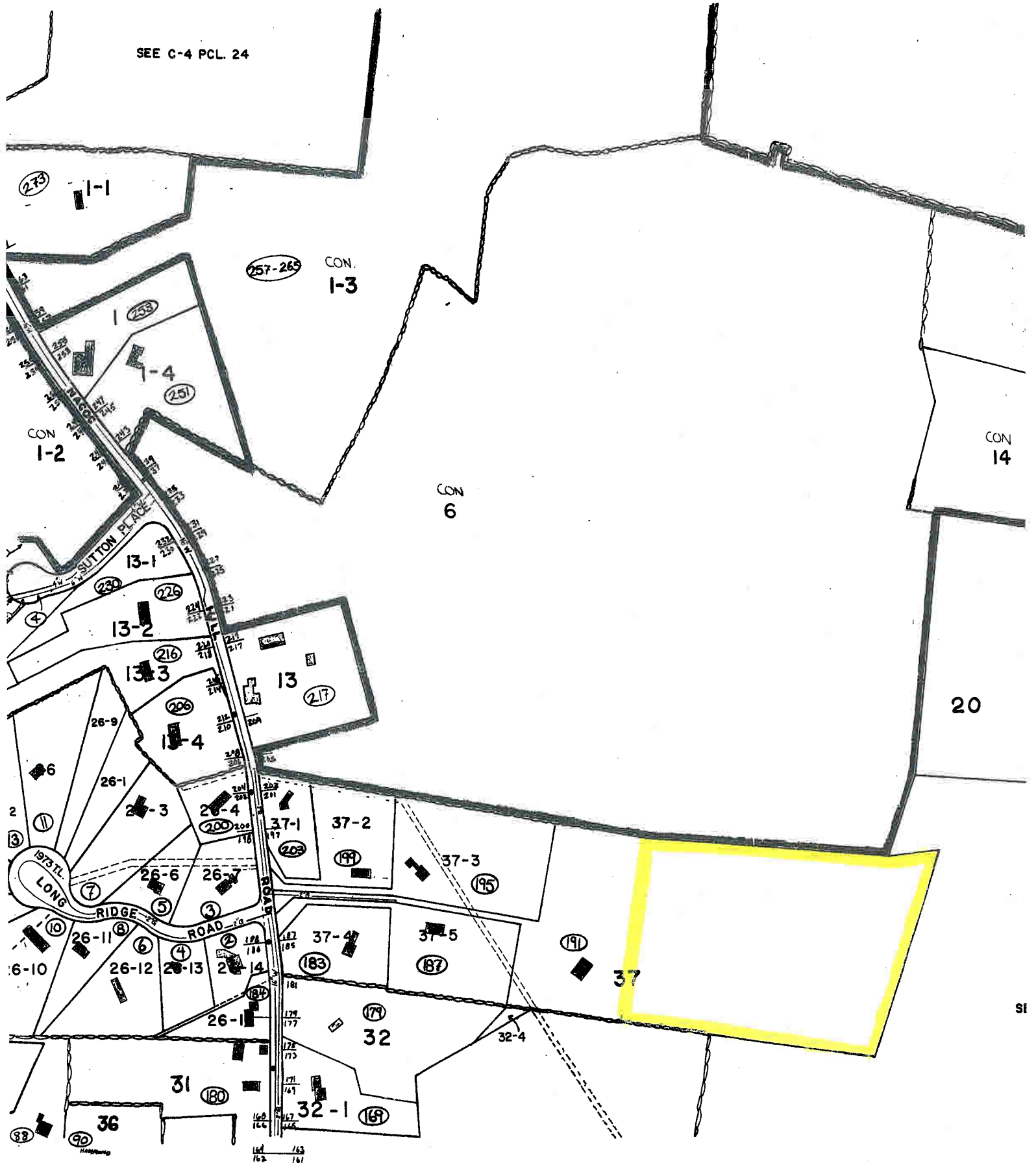


0 2,000 4,000 Feet

## Groener Land Acton, Massachusetts



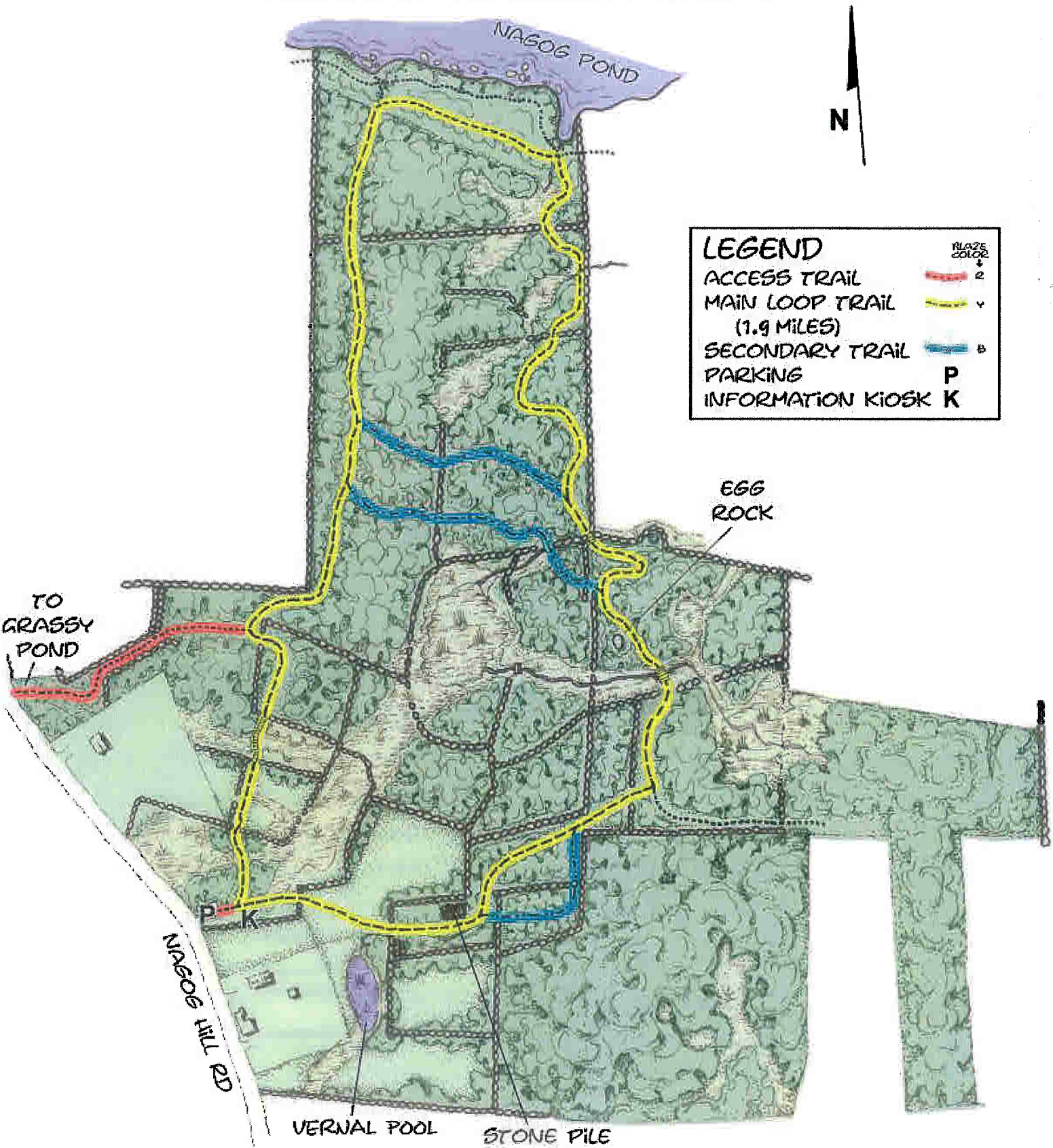
SEE C-4 PCL. 24



C-3	C-4	C-5
D-3	D-4	D-5



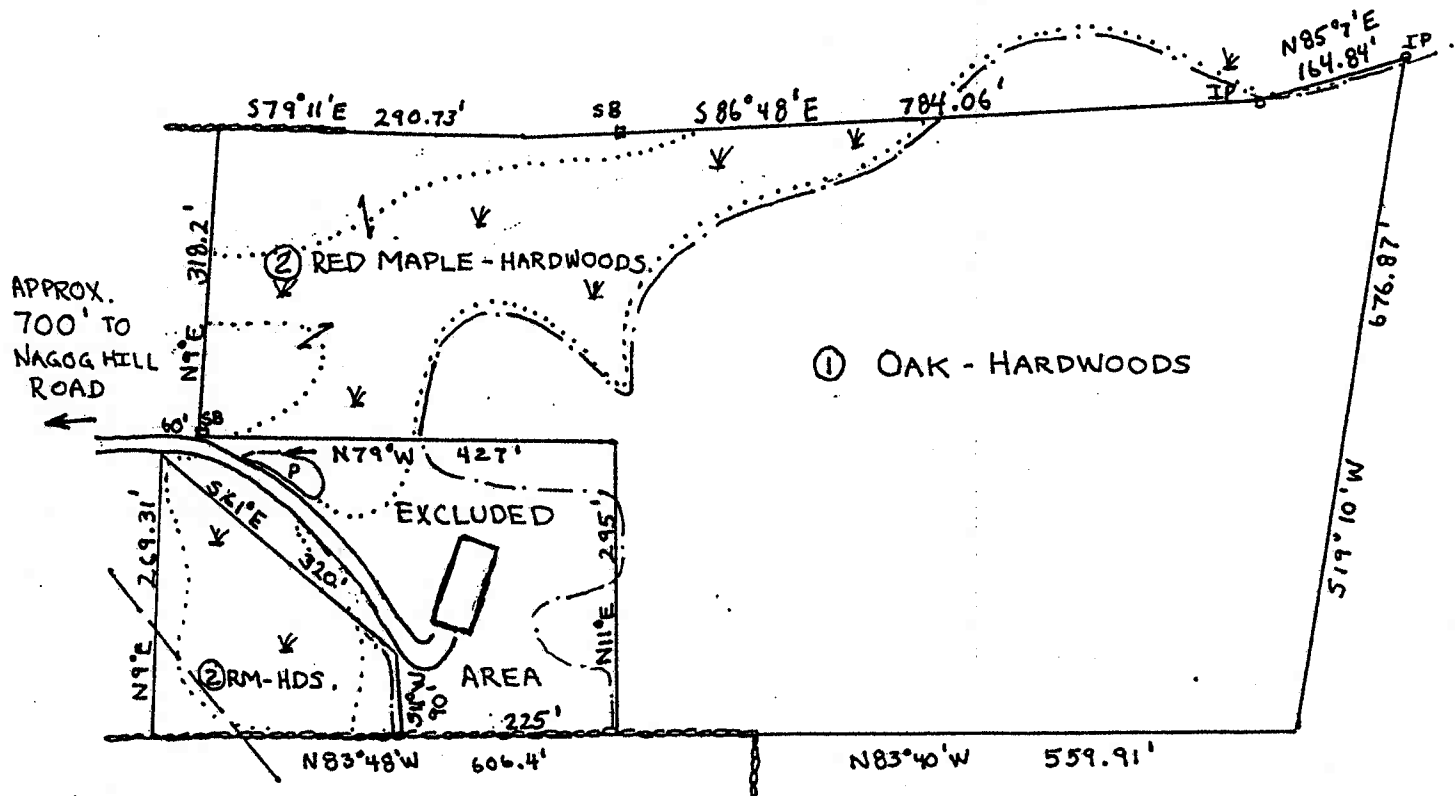
# NAGOG HILL CONSERVATION LAND



PROPERTY OF  
JOHN E., JR. AND JILL GROENER  
191 NAGOG HILL ROAD  
ACTON, MASSACHUSETTS  
01720

ATTACHMENT 1  
PRE-EXISTING FORESTRY  
MAP FROM 1994

NOVEMBER 1994



LEGEND

SCALE: 1" = 200'

- STONE WALL
- HOUSE
- TELEPHONE CABLE
- WETLAND
- FOREST TYPE LINE
- POND
- STONE BOUND
- IRON PIPE

MAP DRAWN BY: JOHN F. ROBBINS, CONSULTING FORESTER  
59 WILSON ROAD, CONCORD, MA 01742  
FOR CHAPTER 61 PURPOSES ONLY